

TICK TESTING

Free Tick Testing Now Available

Our goal at Bay Area Lyme Foundation is to provide individuals with free, timely information as to whether a tick they have encountered is — an infected or uninfected tick. By sending us your tick(s) you are participating in a citizen science project and national tick-collection/testing effort which will enable our scientists to compare past and potential future distributions of ticks and tick-borne disease. Our hope is that by collecting this data, we may be able to predict where risk of disease is most common. **This program is not intended for clinical decisions or as a diagnostic tool.**



Bay Area Lyme Tick Testing Team with Dr Nate Nieto (right)

[Why Are We Offering Free Testing?](#)

Sending us your tick(s) allows our scientific researchers to gather data about ticks from all over the United States. Our scientists can broaden their investigations into tick populations and glean information on the current distribution of the major tick vectors and the prevalence of tick-borne pathogens that people encounter in different locations.

[Tick Testing Form](#)

[How it works](#)

The tick can be dead or alive, but ideally collected less than 72 hours ago. Put your tick in a small Ziploc baggie with a moist cotton ball or piece of wet paper towel. If you have access to a small vial and alcohol, you can use that instead. Click on the image at right to download the 2-page PDF, fill it out completely, electronically or print and fill out by hand. Put the baggie and the document in a small padded envelope.

[Tick Testing Form](#)

Identify your tick

[Click here](#) for images of some of the different tick species in North America. Try and identify what species of tick you are sending to us and indicate this in your document. Don't worry if you can't determine the species.

Send your tick along with the signed paperwork via regular US mail to:

Nathan Nieto, Assistant Professor Microbiology

Department of Biological Sciences

617 S. Beaver Street

Northern Arizona University

Flagstaff, AZ 86011

Considerations

It's important to understand a bit about tick testing when you send us a tick:



- Tick testing is highly accurate—we are using qPCR DNA based tests following column based extractions that are very specific and sensitive (no test is 100% and is the result of sampling error, extraction error and qPCR error). While our test is very good, it cannot be 100%.
- Ticks carry a number of different *kinds* of microbes, not just the bacteria (*Borrelia burgdorferi*) that causes Lyme disease
- Ticks will be tested for 6 pathogens: *Borrelia burgdorferi*, which causes Lyme disease; *Borrelia miyamotoi*, which causes tick-borne relapsing fever; *Anaplasma phagocytophilum*, which causes human granulocytic anaplasmosis, *Ehrlichia chafeensis*, which causes human *monocytic ehrlichiosis*, and *Rickettsia rickettsii*, the agent of Rocky-mountain spotted fever, and the protozoan pathogen, *Babesia microti*.
- If you are sending us a tick that you FOUND—for example crawling on a blade of grass, or climbing up your leg, we still want the tick because we want as much data as possible
- If you are sending us a tick that BIT you, it's important for you to know that even if the tick tests positive, that bacteria *may NOT* have been passed to you



- Either way, if you have been in a place where infected ticks—or any ticks—are present, you should always be watching yourself for [symptoms](#). Why? Because sometimes you may have had another tick on your body for a number of days and you never even knew it
- Note: current diagnostic tools for Lyme and other tick-borne infections may give *false negatives*, so it's important to be aware of your own physical health and seek continuing advice if you start to feel ill. Alternatively, some tests will give *false positives*, something you should also be aware of. See [list of possible symptoms](#)
- We are accepting ticks from the United States only



We've had an overwhelming response. Please be patient!

[How long will it take before I get my results?](#)

Typically, we test batches of ticks and have results within 21 days.

[How will I learn the results?](#)

You will receive an email from our laboratory that will detail the species we identified, and the list of positive and negative results.

[What if I have questions about the findings?](#)

Please feel free to contact the lab with any questions regarding the findings. Use the report number in the subject heading of an email so that we may track your report and respond in a timely manner.

Lastly, when you send us a tick, you will be asked to download, fill out and print out [this form](#) and send it to us WITH your tick. **You must complete the form in full and sign it correctly.** It lets us know that you are agreeing to participate in this nationwide tick-collection study, but that you understand that this is a scientific endeavor and has no bearing on any medical outcome if relevant.

Thank you—your participation will help us gather a lot of ticks, a lot of data, and hopefully lead us to reaching our goal of making Lyme disease easy to diagnose and simple to cure!

[Sign up for our newsletter](#) to stay in touch and receive all the latest information about our search for better diagnostics and a cure for Lyme disease.

If you have additional questions, please email info@bayarealye.org.